

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
BNSF Panhandle Derailment - Removal Polrep
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VI

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial
BNSF Panhandle Derailment

Panhandle, TX
Latitude: 35.3468044 Longitude: -101.3654968

To: Reggie Cheatham, Office of Emergency Management
Ronnie Crossland, Superfund Division
Anthony Buck, TCEQ ER

From: William Rhotenberry, FOSC

Date: 6/29/2016

Reporting Period: 6/28-29/2016

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	A6NJ	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Assessment
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	6/28/2016	Start Date:	6/28/2016
Demob Date:	6/29/2016	Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

This incident is an Emergency Response due to fire from locomotive engines involved in the collision, resulting in a smoke plume with potential impacts to the town of Panhandle, as well as damage to two railcars containing hazardous materials. BNSF Railway is the Responsible Party (RP).

1.1.2 Site Description

On 28 June 2016 at approximately 0825 CST, two BNSF Railway (BNSF) freight trains collided in Panhandle, Carson County, Texas on the main line known as the Southern Transcon. Initial information received in the National Response Center (NRC Report #1151859) reported an unknown amount of diesel fuel spilled onto the ballast of the rail line. An incident update by BNSF and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) reported diesel from the locomotive engines involved in the incident were burning, with no emergency evacuations or road closures initiated in the area. Due to a weather change at the incident, the smoke plume changed to a northwesterly direction and an evacuation of the area was conducted. Three BNSF personnel are unaccounted for and presumed dead by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

1.1.2.1 Location

The Site is located in Panhandle, TX in Carson County, at 35.3468044°, -101.3654968°. The rail line known as Southern Transcon runs east/west, and is located north of Hwy 60.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Burning diesel from the four locomotive engines (two engines per train), and burning commodities from damaged intermodals caused a plume of smoke to impact the incident location. Changing onsite weather conditions, and changing wind direction prompted an evacuation of a residential area located north-northwest of the incident location. Spilled diesel from the locomotive engines impacted the ballast located on the rail line right of way, soil, and vegetation. No visible impact to water was observed.

The westbound train derailed two locomotives and six railcars. The 6 damaged railcars contained mixed commodities with no hazmat listed on railroad documents. There were 4 railcars containing hazmat that were unaffected.

The eastbound train derailed two locomotives and nine railcars. Railcars 3 and 7 were listed as hazmat on railroad documents. Railcar 3 was listed as UN1866, resin solution (resin solution flammable), and railcar 7 was listed as UN1325, flammable solid, organic, N.O.S. (aluminum). The remaining damaged railcars were

listed as mixed commodities with no hazmat listed on railroad documents. The east bound train had 3 other hazmat railcars that were unaffected.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

The EPA and START Contractors arrived in Panhandle, TX at the Carson County Law Enforcement Center at approximately 19:29 on 28 June 2016, and met with Susan Thompson, Jason Pruitt, and Chris Podzemny, Environmental Investigators for the TCEQ Amarillo Region 1 Office. An incident briefing was conducted with the EPA Team, and then the teams proceeded to the incident location.

At the incident location, the EPA Team met with Derrick Lamkin, BNSF representative, and their environmental contractors, CTEH. CTEH described the current air monitoring and sampling operations, which included hourly air monitoring from 13 locations (10 north of Hwy 60, 3 south of Hwy 60) for:

- VOC
- PM 2.5
- CO
- NO
- SO₂

and hourly Air sampling from 4 locations (3 north of Hwy 60, 1 south of Hwy 60) for:

- Aldehydes
- Metals
- PAHs
- VOCs

EPA reviewed the data collected to that point by CTEH. Particulates appeared to be the only potential contaminant of concern. The EPA Team proceeded to locations north of Hwy 60 (directly downwind of incident) to conduct air monitoring utilizing two DataRAM 4™ Particulate Monitors. Particulate readings ranged from 0.03 mg/m³ to 1.60 mg/m³. Prevailing winds were gusting and there were no sustained readings.

On 29 June 2016, the EPA Team and TCEQ Environmental Investigators accompanied CTEH personnel to conduct air monitoring concurrently at the 13 Fixed Real Time (FRT) monitoring locations. Average particulate readings for the locations ranged from 0.001 to 0.007 milligrams per cubic meter.

At 13:00 on 29 June a discussion was held with BNSF regarding remaining environmental issues. The fire was completely out and there were no remaining air issues related to the fire. Impacted soils from the diesel discharged or from various commodities whose containers were breached and spilled will be excavated, sampled and sent to either a local non-hazardous landfill or to a designated hazardous waste facility per TCEQ instructions and oversight. The condition of the railcar containing the aluminum material will be assessed once BNSF is able to access it.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

The EPA Team departed the site on 29 June 2016.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

BNSF Railway is the Responsible party

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

BNSF will excavate, sample and properly dispose of all contaminated soils. BNSF will access and take steps to mitigate any releases from the railcar containing the Aluminum material. Air monitoring activities will continue while soil excavation/disposal activities are ongoing.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

2.2.2 Issues

None

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

TCEQ

Carson County Emergency Management

4. Personnel On Site

Agency Personnel;

1 - EPA FOSC

2 - Weston Solution START Contractors

3 - TCEQ investigators

2 - NTSB Investigators

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.